

# Effects of Constituent Orders on Grammaticalization Patterns of the Serial Verbs for ‘Give’ in Thai and Mandarin Chinese

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## Abstract

The verbs meaning ‘give’ across languages are known to be among the most highly grammaticalized verbs, which exhibit a high degree of polyfunctionality. This paper aims to (i) present commonalities and differences in the grammaticalization of the verbs for ‘give’ in Thai and Mandarin Chinese, namely, *hây* in Thai and *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese, and (ii) investigate how different constituent orders of the head vis-à-vis the modifier and complement in Thai and Mandarin Chinese bear on patterns of grammaticalization of the two verbs. It is found that the functions that *hây* in Thai and *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese share in common are (1) the ditransitive verb use, (2) the dative-marking use, (3) the benefactive-marking use, and (4) the causative-marking use. As for different functions of *hây* and *gěi*, *hây* exhibits the clause connective use, which is lacking in *gěi*, whereas *gěi* exhibit the passive-marking use, which is lacking in *hây*. It is argued that the head-modifier order in Thai seems to be compatible with postverbal grammaticalized morphemes whereas the modifier-head order in Mandarin Chinese seems to be compatible with preverbal grammaticalized ones.

## 1 Introduction

It is generally known that Thai and Mandarin Chinese are typologically similar in many respects. They are isolating, topic-prominent, serializing, have the SVO basic word order and rich with grammaticalized morphemes. However, there is one important difference between them, i.e. difference in constituent order. Mandarin

Chinese has the modifier-head order whereas Thai has the head-modifier one. This paper investigates how the difference in constituent order in Thai and Mandarin Chinese bears on patterns of grammaticalization of serial verbs in the two languages. The serial verbs for ‘give’ in Thai and Mandarin Chinese, i.e. *hây* and *gěi*, are used as a case study. The verbs meaning ‘give’ across languages are known to be among the most highly grammaticalized verbs, which exhibit a high degree of polyfunctionality. The analysis in this paper is based on the findings of a synchronic contrastive study of *hây* and *gěi* presented in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008).

## 2 Commonalities and differences

Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) make a synchronic contrastive study of the polysemous morphemes *hây* and *gěi* in Thai and Mandarin Chinese. It is found in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) that *hây* and *gěi* share four main uses, namely, the ditransitive (main) verb use, the dative-marking use, the benefactive-marking use and the causative-marking use. As for differences between *hây* and *gěi*, one important use that is missing in *hây* is the passive-marking use whereas one that is missing in *gěi* is the clause connective function. The commonalities between the two verbs are discussed in section 2.1 and the differences in section 2.2. The examples provided are drawn from Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008).

### 2.1 Commonalities between *hây* and *gěi*

The first common function between *hây* and *gěi* is the ditransitive main verb use. *Hây* and *gěi* in

this use co-occur with two NPs following each other in a row. The structural schemas of the ditransitive verbs *hây* and *gěi* and some examples of this use are given below. Notice that the semantic roles of NP1 and NP2 in Thai and Mandarin Chinese are different.

#### Ditransitive verb use

Thai: [hây + NP1 + NP2]

(thing) (recipient)

- (1) sǒmsàk hây ɲən sǒmchay  
Somsak give money Somchay  
'Somsak gave Somchay some money.'

Mandarin Chinese: [gěi + NP1 + NP2]

(recipient) (thing)

- (2) Zhāngsān gěi Lǐsì qián  
Zhangsan give Lisi money  
'Zhangsan gave Lisi some money.'

#### Dative-marking use

Thai: [V + NP1 +hây+ NP2]

(thing) (recipient)

- (3) sǒmsàk sǒɲ ɲən hây sǒmchay  
Somsak send money give Somchay  
'Somsak sent some money to Somchay.'

#### Mandarin Chinese: 2 schemas

##### Schema 1: postverbal gěi

[V + NP1 + gěi + NP2]

(thing) (recipient)

- (4) Zhāngsān jì-le yì fēng  
Zhangsan send-ASP one CLS  
xìn gěi Lǐsì  
letter give Lisi  
'Zhangsan mailed a letter to Lisi.'

##### Schema 2: preverbal gěi

[gěi + NP1 + V + NP2]

(recipient) (thing)

- (5) Zhāngsān gěi Lǐsì mǎi  
Zhangsan give Lisi buy  
yì běn shū  
one CLS book  
'Zhangsan bought a book for (and gave it to) Lisi'

Notice that the dative *hây* in Thai occurs postverbally whereas the dative *gěi* occurs both preverbally and postverbally.

Newman (1993b) argues that an act of giving naturally results in some kind of benefit to the recipient. Even a non-giving action, such as driving, speaking and cleaning can also be done

for the benefit of someone. The person who benefits from the agent's action is usually called a beneficiary. Therefore, it is natural that *hây* and *gěi* can also function as benefactive markers. The notion of benefactive is more complicated than generally assumed. Three types of benefactive are postulated in this paper as below.

(a) Recipient benefactive: The beneficiary gains a benefit by virtue of being a recipient of a concrete entity, for example, *John* bought a sweater for Mary.

(b) Benefit benefactive: The beneficiary gains a more or less abstract benefit from somebody's action, for example, *John* sang a song for Mary.

(c) Behalf benefactive: The beneficiary gains a benefit from somebody who performs an action on his/her behalf, for example, *John* drove a car for Mary because she was drunk.

It is found that the Thai *hây* can be used to mark the three types of benefactive as shown below.

#### Recipient benefactive

- (6) sǒmsàk súu suǎnǎaw hây  
Somsak buy sweater give  
sǒmchay  
Somchay  
'Somsak bought a sweater for Somchay.'

#### Benefit benefactive

- (7) sǒmsàk tàt phǒm hây sǒmchay  
Somsak cut hair give Somchay  
'Somsak cut hair for Somchay.' Or  
'Somsak cut Somchay's hair.'

#### Behalf benefactive

- (8) sǒmsàk khàprót hây sǒmchay  
Somsak drive a car give Somchay  
'Somsak drove a car for Somchay.'

It is noted that the benefactive *hây* is ambiguous between the recipient benefactive and behalf benefactive readings if the main verb incorporates the sense of giving or involves the manipulation of an entity as shown in (9) and (10).

- (9) sǒmsàk sǒɲ còtmǎay hây sǒmchay  
Somsak send letter give Somchay  
'Somsak sent a letter to Somchay.' Or  
'Somsak sent a letter on Somchay's behalf.'

- (10) sǒmsàk suíu nǎngsuíu hây  
 Somsak buy book give  
 sǒmchay  
 Somchay  
 ‘Somsak bought a book and gave it to  
 Somchay.’ Or  
 ‘Somchay bought a book on Somchay’s  
 behalf.’

It is found that the Mandarin Chinese *gěi* can be used to mark the recipient benefactive and the benefit benefactive in some cases as shown below.

- (11) Zhāngsān gěi Lǐsì mǎi  
 Zhangsan give Lisi buy  
 yì běn shū  
 one CLS book  
 ‘Zhangsan bought a book for (and gave it to)  
 Lisi’

- (12) Zhāngsān gěi wǒmen chàng  
 Zhangsan give us sing  
 yì shǒu gē  
 one CLS song  
 ‘Zhangsan sang a song for us.’

The structural schemas of the benefactive *hây* and *gěi* are given below.

Benefactive-marking use

Thai: [V + (NP1) + *hây* + NP2]  
 (beneficiary)

Mandarin Chinese: [*gěi* + NP1 + V+ (NP2)]  
 (beneficiary)

Notice that the benefactive *hây* and *gěi* occur in different positions. The former occurs postverbally, i.e. after the main verb, whereas the latter occurs preverbally, i.e. before the main verb.

The third common use of *hây* and *gěi* is the causative use. The causative constructions with the causative-marking *hây* and *gěi* in Thai and Mandarin Chinese have the same syntactic schema as below.

Causative-marking use

Thai and Mandarin Chinese:

- [NP1 + *hây/gěi* + NP2 + VP]  
 (causer) (causee)  
 (13) sǒmsàk hây sǒmchay ʔǒk pay  
 Somsak give Somchay exit go

‘Somsak had Somchay go out.’

- (14) Zhāngsān gěi Lǐsì kàn  
 Zhangsan give Lisi look  
 ‘Zhangsan let Lisi look.’

The NP1 in the schema above is the causer whereas the NP2 is the causee. The causer is typically human whereas the causee is typically animate. The causative verbs *hây* and *gěi* express an indirect causation in which the causer intentionally causes an event to take place by doing something to prompt the causer to act or by not doing something which prevents that event to take place. The causee is the person who directly causes the event to take place. Notice that the causative *gěi* occurs in the same position as the benefactive *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese, which results in ambiguity between the causative and benefactive readings in some cases as shown in (15), which is taken from Newman (1996:20).

- (15) wǒ gěi nǐ kàn  
 I give you look  
 ‘I let you look.’ (causative) Or  
 ‘I look on your behalf.’ (benefactive)

According to Yap and Iwasaki (1998), native speakers of Mandarin Chinese tend to interpret *gěi* in (15) as the benefactive marker rather than the causative one as in (16).

- (16) tā gěi wǒ zào-le  
 s/he give me build-ASP  
 yì dòng fǎngzi  
 one CLS house  
 ‘S/he built a house for me.’ (preferred)  
 ‘S/he had me build a house.’ (awkward)

Yap and Iwasaki (1998) note that Mandarin Chinese prefers the causative verbs *ràng* and *jiào* to the verb *gěi* in expressing indirect causation as in (17).

- (17) tā \*gěi/ràng/jiào hái zi shuì-jiào  
 s/he CAUSE child sleep  
 ‘She let the child sleep.’

The use of *ràng* and *jiào* rather than *gěi* to express causation helps prevent the ambiguity between the causative and benefactive readings that can arise if *gěi* is used as the causative verb, which occurs in the same position as the benefactive *gěi*. It is therefore not surprising that the use of the causative *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese

is much more restricted than the use of the causative *hây* in Thai because the latter does not create ambiguity as the former.

## 2.2 Differences between *hây* and *gěi*

*Hây* and *gěi* are different in two ways. There is one important use of *hây* which is missing in *gěi*, namely, clause connective use, and one important use of *gěi* which is missing in *hây*, namely passive-marking function. The clause connective use, which is missing in *gěi* is discussed first.

The connective *hây* in Thai takes place in complex constructions in which *hây* functions as a subordinator which links two predicates or two clauses. The first clause in the complex construction is the matrix clause and the other is the subordinate one. The complex constructions in which *hây* functions as the subordinator can be classified into three types, namely, a purposive construction, a jussive construction and a complementation construction. The purposive construction is a complex construction in which the subordinate clause functions as a purpose of the performance of an action denoted by the matrix clause. The jussive construction expresses a command, request or demand made by one participant towards another in order for the latter to perform an action (Van Valin and LaPolla, 1997). The complementation construction is a complex construction in which the subordinate clause functions as a complement of the desiderative predicate of the matrix clause. The structural schema of the connective *hây* and some examples of the three types of complex constructions containing *hây* are given below.

Clause connective use

Thai:  $s_1[NP1 + VP1] + hây + s_2[NP2 + VP2]$

From Rangkuphan (1997:36)

Purposive construction

- (18) 

nuan	phlāk	kæ̌æw	hây
Nuan	push	Kaew	give
klīŋ	pay	rǔâyrǔây	
roll	go	continually	

‘Nuan pushed the glass in order for it to keep rolling.’

- (19) 

nuan	khon	námtaan	hây	lalaay
Nuan	stir	sugar	give	melt

‘Nuan stirred the sugar in order for it to melt.’

Jussive construction

- (20) 

sǒmsāk	bòok	hây	sǒmchay	maa
Somsak	tell	give	Somchay	come

‘Somsak told Somchay to come.’

- (21) 

sǒmsāk	sàŋ	hây	sǒmchay
Somsak	order	give	Somchay
klāp	bāan		
return	home		

‘Somsak ordered that Somchay go home.’

Complementation

- (22) 

sǒmsāk	yàak	hây	sǒmchay
Somsak	want	give	Somchay
maa	hǎa		
come	see		

‘Somsak wanted Somchay to come to see him.’

- (23) 

sǒmsāk	tōŋkaan	hây	lūuk
Somsak	want	give	child
rian	phæ̌æt		
study	medicine		

‘Somsak wanted his child to study medicine.’

Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) argue that each type of complex construction results from a reanalysis of *hây* from the causative verb to the subordinator. In the reanalysis process, the causative *hây* is semantically bleached out and loses its verbal properties to varying degrees in the three types of complex construction. In other words, *hây* in the three types of complex construction has different degrees of function word properties. It is argued in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) that the connective *hây* in the complex constructions is derived, extended or grammaticalized from the causative *hây*. The *hây*'s in all of these cases are followed by a clause or a predicate. The causative *hây* functions as the main verb in the causative construction whereas the connective *hây* is preceded by a main verb and followed by a clause or a predicate. It is found that there is an intention that an event take place in the subject of the matrix clause in all of the three types of complex construction and in the subject of the causative *hây*. It is argued in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) that the notion of indirect causation has the highest degree of saliency in

the causative *hây* but has decreasing degrees of saliency in the purposive, jussive and complementation constructions.

On the other hand, one important use of *gěi* which is missing in *hây* is the passive-marking function. The passive-marking function is alternatively called the agentive-marking function. The structural schema of the passive-marking *gěi* and some examples are given below.

Passive-marking use

Mandarin Chinese: [NP1 + *gěi*+ NP2 + VP]

From Haspelmath (1990:48)

(24) Lisi        *gěi* Zhāngsān      kànjiàn-le  
       Lisi        give Zhangsan      see-ASP  
       ‘Lisi was seen by Zhangsan.’

From Newman (1993b:471)

(25) jīnyú      *gěi*        māo        chī-le  
       goldfish give      cat        eat-ASP  
       ‘The goldfish was eaten by the cat.’

According to Xu (1994), the passive *gěi* is used in colloquial speech whereas the other passive marker, *bèi*, is used in formal speech. In addition, a verb which co-occurs with the passive *gěi* must be marked by the aspect marker *le*, otherwise the sentence with *gěi* will not be interpreted as a passive sentence. Many works, such as Newman 1993a, b), Xu (1994), Yap and Iwasaki (1998, 2003) argue correspondingly that the passive *gěi* is directly derived from the causative *gěi* via the reflexive context. An important question is why the development from a causative use into a passive one does not take place in Thai. Yap and Iwasaki (1998) found out that *hây* in Thai takes only a volitional causer. Yap and Iwasaki (2003) argue that only nonvolitionality on the part of the causer can allow a passive interpretation to emerge. Therefore, the high degree of volitionality of the causer prevents *hây* from developing into a passive marker in Thai.

### 2.3 Summary

In summary, *hây* in Thai occurs in four constructions, namely, the ditransitive construction, the prepositional phrase, the causative construction and the complex construction. *Hây* functions as the ditransitive main verb, dative and benefactive markers, causative verb and clause connector or subordinator, respectively. Each of the four constructions has its own structural schema as

below. The syntactic category of *hây* in each construction and function is specified under each structural schema in the rightmost column.

No.	Construction type Containing <i>hây</i>	Function of <i>hây</i>	Structural Schema
1	ditransitive construction	ditransitive (main) verb	<i>hây</i> + NP1 + NP2 main verb
2	prepositional phrase	dative marker; benefactive marker	VP+ <sub>pp</sub> [ <i>hây</i> + NP] preposition
3	causative construction	causative verb	NP1+ <i>hây</i> +NP2+ VP causative verb
4.	complex sentence	clause connector	<sub>s1</sub> [NP1+VP2]      + <i>hây</i> + <sub>s2</sub> [NP2+VP2] subordinator

Table 1. Functions and Structural Schemas of *Hây*

On the other hand, *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese appears in four constructions, namely, the ditransitive construction, the prepositional phrase, the causative construction and the passive construction. *Gěi* functions as the ditransitive main verb, dative and benefactive markers, causative verb and passive marker, respectively. The constructions in which *gěi* appears, the functions and the structural schemas of all constructions containing *gěi* appear in Table 2.

No.	Construction type Containing <i>gěi</i>	Function of <i>gěi</i>	Structural Schema
1	ditransitive construction	ditransitive (main) verb	<i>gěi</i> + NP1 + NP2 main verb
2	prepositional phrase	dative marker	VP + <sub>pp</sub> [ <i>gěi</i> + NP] preposition
		benefactive marker	<sub>pp</sub> [ <i>gěi</i> + NP] + VP preposition
3	causative construction	causative verb	NP1+ <i>gěi</i> +NP2+ VP causative verb and passive marker
4	passive construction	passive marker	

Table 2. Functions and Structural Schemas of *Gěi*

Some observations can be made regarding the functions, the structural schemas and the productivity of *hây* and *gěi* in the functions specified in the tables above as follows.

- (a) The clause connector use is possible for *hây* in Thai but is lacking for *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese.
- (b) The passive-marking use is possible for *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese but is lacking for *hây* in Thai.
- (c) The *gěi*-marked dative PP in Mandarin Chinese can occur both before and after the main VP whereas the *hây*-marked dative PP can occur only after the main VP. That means there are two structural schemas of the dative *gěi* whereas there is only one of the dative *hây*.
- (d) Even though the *gěi*-marked dative PP in Mandarin Chinese is claimed by many researchers to occur both before and after the main VP, only the preverbal *gěi*-marked dative PPs, not the postverbal ones, are attested in a Beijing Mandarin speech corpus (Sanders and Uehara, 2012).
- (e) The *gěi*-marked benefactive PP in Mandarin Chinese can occur only before the main verb phrase.
- (f) The postverbal [*hây*+NP] in Thai and the preverbal [*gěi*+NP] in Mandarin Chinese can be ambiguous between the dative and benefactive interpretations if the main VP incorporates the sense of giving.
- (g) The structural schemas of the causative and the passive *gěi* are identical.
- (h) The causative use of *hây* in Thai is productive but that of *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese is not.

In section 3, we will argue for the relationship between constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese on the one hand and patterns of grammaticalization of *hây* and *gěi* on the other.

### 3. Effects of constituent orders on patterns of grammaticalization of *hây* and *gěi*

In this section, we will point out how constituent orders in Thai and Chinese bear on patterns of grammaticalization of *hây* and *gěi* in both languages. The constituent orders to be discussed in this section are those of a head vis-à-vis a modifier and those of a head vis-à-vis a

complement. A complement is a syntactic category that is selected or subcategorized for by the head of a phrase. A complement is therefore semantically necessary for the head to become semantically complete. Some examples of complements are below.

(26) I cut a tree.

(27) She put a book on the table.

In (26) and (27), the direct object nominals *a tree* and *a book* function as complements of the verbs *cut* and *put* respectively. In addition, the prepositional phrase *on the table* also functions as another complement of the verb *put* in (27) because the verb *put* is semantically incomplete without it. On the other hand, a modifier is an expression which limits or qualifies the meaning of a word, a phrase or a sentence. It is less semantically crucial to the meaning of a head than a complement. In other words, a modifier is more semantically peripheral than a complement. The underlined parts in (28) and (30) illustrate the modifiers in the sentences.

(28) The tree is very tall.

(29) She read the newspaper in the living room.

(30) She went to see a movie after dinner.

In (28), *very* modifies *tall*. In (29) and (30), the phrases *in the living room* and *after dinner* modify the predicates in the clauses. The three sentences above are semantically complete without the modifiers. However, Langacker (1987) acknowledges that the demarcation between modification and complementation is sometimes hard to draw because the difference between them is a matter of degree.

It is generally known that the constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese are different in that Thai has the head-modifier constituent order whereas Mandarin Chinese has the modifier-head one. The difference in constituent order in the two languages is illustrated below. The adverbial modifiers in the examples are underlined.

Thai  
(31) *khun*      *pay*      *kòon*  
         you      go      first  
         ‘You go first.’

Mandarin Chinese  
(32) *nǐ*      *xiān*      *zǒu*  
         you      first      go

‘You go first.’

However, in case of the head and complement, the constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese are identical, that is, head-complement order. Therefore, in Mandarin Chinese, the modifier appears before the head whereas the complement appears after the head. On the other hand, in Thai, both the modifier and the complement appear after the head. In this section, we will point out that the constituent orders of the head and modifier and of the head and complement in Thai and Mandarin Chinese have some effects on patterns of grammaticalization of *hây* in Thai and *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese. To be specific, we will provide answers to the following questions in terms of different constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese.

1. Why does the benefactive [*gěi*+NP] occur only in the preverbal position, not the postverbal position, in Mandarin Chinese?
2. Unlike the benefactive [*gěi*+NP], the dative [*gěi*+NP] occurs both preverbally and postverbally in Mandarin Chinese. Why does the dative [*gěi*+NP] behave differently from the benefactive [*gěi*+NP]?
3. Why do the dative [*hây*+NP] and the benefactive [*hây*+NP] not occur in the preverbal position in Thai?
4. Why is the causative *gěi* not productive in Mandarin Chinese?
5. Why is *gěi* not used as a clause subordinator in Mandarin Chinese? In contrast, why is *hây* used as a clause subordinator in Thai? Moreover, why is the clause subordinator *hây* used highly productively in Thai?

The first question is why the benefactive [*gěi*+NP] occurs only in the preverbal position, not the postverbal position, in Mandarin Chinese. In order to answer this question, we have to understand the role of the benefactive PP in a sentence. The benefactive PP in a sentence serves as a modifier, rather than a complement, of the main VP because it is peripheral and can be omitted. It functions like an adverbial phrase modifying the main VP. It merely adds an extra piece of information regarding who benefits from the agent’s action. Therefore, the preverbal benefactive [*gěi*+NP] matches the modifier-head constituent order in Mandarin Chinese. The postverbal benefactive [*gěi*+NP] would violate this constituent order in the language.

The second question is why the dative [*gěi*+NP] behaves differently from the benefactive [*gěi*+NP] in Mandarin Chinese. That is, the dative [*gěi*+NP] occurs both preverbally and postverbally whereas the benefactive [*gěi*+NP] occurs only preverbally. We argue that a dative constituent, which expresses a participant receiving a thing in a transfer event, is located somewhere on a continuum between a complement and a modifier. A recipient is sometimes analyzed as a semantically crucial participant for a transfer event to be semantically complete. This is because the transfer event is usually analyzed as consisting of three crucial participants, namely, a giver, a thing given and a recipient. However, the recipient is in some contexts perceived as not as semantically crucial as the other two participants as in *John* donates *blood* every month. On the other hand, the recipient in *John* gave *an expensive birthday present* to his mother, can be perceived to be a semantically crucial participant. That means the recipient can be perceived as a complement in some contexts and as a modifier in some others. Since the dative PP denoting a recipient fluctuates on the complement-modifier continuum, it is not surprising that the dative PP in Mandarin Chinese can occur both preverbally and postverbally according to the head-complement and modifier-head constituent orders in Mandarin Chinese. However, Sanders and Uehara (2012) found that the dative [*gěi*+NP] occur only preverbally in a speech corpus of Beijing Mandarin Chinese. This fact may suggest that the dative [*gěi*+NP] in spoken Beijing Mandarin Chinese is perceived to be modifier-like rather than complement-like. The examples below illustrate the preverbal dative [*gěi*+NP] in spoken Beijing Mandarin Chinese.

Data from Sanders’ and Uehara’s personal communication

(33) *méi gěi nǐ xiě*  
not give you write  
‘I haven’t written to you.’

(34) *wǒ gěi nǐmen shuō ya*  
I give you (pl.) say PART.  
‘Let me tell you.’

The third question is why the dative and benefactive [*hây*+NP] do not occur preverbally in Thai. In the grammaticalization process, a string of [V1+NP1] + [V2+NP2] is reanalyzed into [V+NP1] + [P+NP2]. That is, the second

verb is grammaticalized into a preposition marking a dative and benefactive NP. The PP functioning as a complement and a modifier occurs after the main VP. Therefore, the fact that the dative and benefactive [hây+NP] constituents do not occur preverbally matches the predominant head-complement/modifier constituent order in Thai.

The fourth question is why the causative *gěi* is not productive in Mandarin Chinese. Unlike the benefactive *gěi* and the dative *gěi*, which are grammaticalized into prepositions, the causative *gěi* is more verb-like in that it can be negated. Notice that the causative *gěi* appears in the same position as the benefactive *gěi*, i.e. the preverbal position, which bears two consequences. The first consequence is that the preverbal *gěi* tends to be analyzed as the benefactive marker functioning as a modifier of the main VP, which corresponds to the predominant modifier-head constituent order in Mandarin Chinese, rather than as the causative verb. The second consequence is that the preverbal *gěi* in some cases can give rise to ambiguity between the causative and the benefactive readings. It is found that the other causative verbs *ràng* and *jiào* are used more frequently than *gěi* in order to avoid ambiguity as stated earlier in the paper.

The last question is why *gěi* is not used as a clause subordinator in Mandarin Chinese but *hây* is in Thai? Moreover, why is the clause subordinator *hây* used highly productively in Thai? A complex construction consists of a matrix clause and a subordinating clause. Most subordinating clauses function as modifiers of the matrix VPs. In Mandarin Chinese, modifiers precede heads. Therefore, the postverbal position is not a perfect site for a verb to be grammaticalized into a subordinator in Mandarin Chinese. This is the reason why we do not find the postverbal subordinator *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese. In contrast, the postverbal position is a perfect site for a verb to be grammaticalized into a subordinator introducing a subordinating clause in Thai because it matches the head-modifier constituent order in the language. That is why *hây* is used as subordinator with a high degree of productivity in Thai.

However, it is noted in some previous works that *gěi* is used as a subordinator to introduce an adverbial clause occurring after a matrix clause

in the head-adverbial clause order. This use of *gěi* is exemplified by (35).

- (35) Zhāngsān      chāng      gē      gěi  
 Zhangsan      sing      song      give  
 tā      tīng  
 he/she      hear  
 ‘Zhangsan sang a song for him/her to hear.’

However, this construction is not attested in a Beijing Mandarin speech corpus according to Sanders and Uehara (2012). To express this meaning, the benefactive *gěi* is used instead as in (36).

- (36) Zhāngsān      gěi      tā      chāng  
 Zhangsan      give      he/she      sing  
 gē  
 song  
 ‘Zhangsan sang a song for him/her.’

The fact that the subordinator *gěi* is not found in spoken Beijing Mandarin Chinese confirms our hypothesis that the postverbal position is not a perfect site for *gěi* to be grammaticalized into a subordinator.

Another observation can be made regarding the grammaticalized passive marker *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese. It is noted in Thepkanjana and Uehara (2008) that the passive *gěi* in the structural schema [*gěi* + NP + VP] has been developed into what Newman (1993b: 477) calls “the prefixal *gěi* in passive constructions” as in (35).

From Newman (1993b: 477)

- (37) tā      gěi-mà-le  
 he      PASSIVE-scold-ASP  
 ‘He/She was scolded.’

This phenomenon, which indicates that the second verb becomes the head which the prefix *gěi* is attached to, corresponds with the modifier-head pattern constituent order in Mandarin Chinese.

#### 4 Conclusion

This paper presents commonalities and differences in the grammaticalization of *hây* in Thai and *gěi* in Mandarin Chinese and argues how different constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese bear on patterns of



Grammaticalization of the two verbs in the two languages. It is found that the common functions shared by *hây* and *gěi* are (1) the ditransitive main use, (2) the dative-marking use, (3) the benefactive-marking use and (4) the causative-marking use. As for differences, *hây*, not *gěi*, is used as a subordinator connecting two clauses in a complex construction whereas *gěi*, not *hây*, is used as a passive marker. Five questions are posed regarding different patterns of grammaticalization of *hây* and *gěi* in Thai and Mandarin Chinese. Facts about different patterns of grammaticalization of the two morphemes under discussion are accounted for in terms of different constituent orders in Thai and Mandarin Chinese, i.e. head-modifier/complement in Thai, modifier-head and head-complement in Mandarin Chinese. It is argued that the head-modifier constituent order in Thai seems to be compatible with postverbal grammaticalized morphemes whereas the modifier-head order in Mandarin Chinese seems to be compatible with preverbal grammaticalized ones.

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